



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

REGION 10

1200 Sixth Avenue
Seattle, WA 98101

FEB 28 2000

Reply To
Attn Of: ECO-087

Mark Van Putten
President and CEO
National Wildlife Federation
8925 Leesburg Pike
Vienna, VA 22184-0001

Dear Mr. Van Putten:

Thank you for your January 17, 2000, letter to Carol Browner, Administrator of the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), concerning water quality standard exceedances in the Lower Snake River. We agree that the Federal agencies who manage the Federal Columbia River Power System must address future Clean Water Act compliance. I am personally engaged in discussions and negotiations to ensure that federal facilities are managed so as to reduce or eliminate exceedances of water quality standards in the Columbia/Snake River mainstem and to take advantage of opportunities that are emerging with upcoming Columbia River Endangered Species Act decisions.

EPA is currently involved in four critical efforts to address water quality standards for **temperature** and dissolved gas in the Columbia/Snake River: first, participation in the development of the 2000 Federal Columbia River Power System Biological Opinion to incorporate Clean Water Act and water quality considerations; second, the development of the Columbia River Water Quality Plan, a Total Maximum Daily Load for the Columbia/Snake River mainstem, in concert with the states and tribes; third, development of the final All-H Paper, Conservation of Columbia Basin Fish Plan-A Conceptual Recovery Plan for the Columbia River Basin; and finally, the review of the Lower Snake River Juvenile Migration Feasibility Study Draft Environmental Impact Statement (Lower Snake River DEIS). Our review of the Lower Snake River DEIS will address an economic analysis of the cost of complying with Clean Water Act standards.

In response to your specific request to engage the Administrator, I will ensure Administrator Browner is fully informed and up to date on our Columbia River mainstem Clean Water Act work efforts and discussions. I appreciate the engagement of the National Wildlife Federation in this critical issue. If you need further information, feel free to contact me at (206) 553-1234 or have your staff contact Mary Lou Soscia at (503) 326-5873.

Sincerely,

Chuck Clarke
Regional Administrator

